



SHASTA FAMILY YMCA
Raising A Reader Program

In the Spring of 2005, Shasta Family YMCA became an affiliate of *Raising A Reader* by being the recipient of an early literacy grant co-funded by First 5 Shasta and The McConnell Foundation to initiate and support the program through June of 2009.

Raising A Reader is a national network of early literacy leaders striving to achieve the collective mission to give every child an equal opportunity at life success by establishing kindergarten reading readiness and a love of books by participating in the book bag delivery system set up through children's programs that serve children ages birth through five years of age.

Parents, teachers and child care providers are being trained on the benefits of reading aloud and how to implement the program that consists of a rotation of literary-acclaimed children's books that go home in bright red book bags that are inscribed with the words "Read to Me." After children have participated in the book bag rotation for five to six months, they are awarded their very own blue library book bag which will connect them to their local library. The goals of the program are not only to promote kindergarten readiness and early literacy skills, but also to enhance parent-child relationships and to encourage families to use the library with their children to kindle the desire for life-long learning.

As of January 2008, Shasta Family YMCA has had over 3,000 children ages 0-5 participating in the *Raising A Reader* program in Shasta, Siskiyou, Tehama and Trinity Counties. The children are being served through 148 different programs, which include Family Child Care, Head Start, State Preschools, School District Preschools, Private Centers and Non-Child Care agencies who are participating in *Raising A Reader*.

Program evaluations from the first and second year reflected a significant increase in the frequency that parents read with their children, an increase in the number of children's books in their homes and an increase in the number of families who had visited the library. Parents shared that they enjoyed the program and appreciated the variety of books available to their children on an on-going basis. Some parents also mentioned that family reading has become a favorite family activity and adults in the household are reading more for pleasure. The developmental assessments comparing the children participating in the *Raising A Reader* program with non-participating children showed that kindergarten readiness and early literacy skills were enhanced by a higher recognition of print in the environment; children have a greater interest in books and engage in discussions about books; a higher number of the children had gained the understanding that letters make up words.

At the end of each school year, *Raising A Reader* Blue Library Book Bags have been distributed to participating children. In the Blue Library Book Bag, each child is given a book to keep and the parents are given handouts on early literacy activities, the 40 Development Assets, and library information (including a library card application with the *Raising A Reader* logo on it that is tracked to log the number of *Raising A Reader* families applying for library cards). At many of the Blue Library Book Bag presentations, the library mascot, "Dewey Decimole," presents the bag to each child making the event fun and special. Local libraries have noted that several of the Blue Library Book Bags have come through the library doors carried by preschool children with an enthusiastic desire to "read" books!



Project funded by First 5 Shasta, The McConnell Foundation and Additional Funding Sources
YMCA Raising A Reader has served over 6,000 children through 149 Programs since July 2005

Shasta County Office of Education-32 Programs

State Preschool Classrooms-18

Anderson Early Education Center
Bella Vista Part Day Preschool (2), Redding
Birchwood Part Day Preschool (2), Redding
Bonny View Part Day Preschool, Redding
Preschool of the Arts at Buckeye (2), Redding
Cypress part Day Preschool, Redding
Juniper Part Day Preschool, Redding
Lassen View Part Day Preschool, Redding
Magnolia Part Day Preschool (2), Redding
Mistletoe Part Day Preschool (2), Redding
Monte Vista part Day Preschool, Redding
Prairie part Day Preschool, Redding
Shasta College Collaboration, Redding

Full Day Preschool/Child Care Classrooms-8

Anderson Early Education Center (2)
Preschool of the Arts at Buckeye, Redding
Central Valley Children's Center
Juniper Children's Center, Redding
Monte Vista Children's Center (3), Redding

Full Day Toddler/Child Care Classrooms-3

Central Valley Toddler Center
Monte Vista Toddler Center (2), Redding

Early Intervention Home Visiting Programs-3

Excel Academy, Shasta County

School District Preschools-21 Programs

Cascade District, Anderson
Meadow Lane (2)

Columbia District, Redding
Lion Cubs Preschool

Enterprise Elementary School District

Alta Mesa AM & PM
Alta Mesa Special Day Preschool
Boulder Creek AM & PM
Rother AM & PM
Shasta Meadows AM & PM

Gateway Elementary School District

Busy Bee
Little Learners

Happy Valley School District

Happy Valley Children's Center

Oak Run School District

Oak Seed Preschool

Redding Elementary School District

Juniper Special Day Preschool
Manzanita Pre-Kindergarten
Sycamore Preschool

Shasta Community College, Redding

Early Childhood Education Center (2)

Private Centers-8 Centers

Brush Street Schoolhouse, Cottonwood
Intermountain Community Preschool, Burney
Kinderland Child Development Center, Redding
Learning In Motion Preschool, Anderson
Munchkin University, Redding
Pre-Employ.com Preschool, Anderson
Redding Co-Op Preschool

Shasta Head Start-38 Programs

Anderson (2)
Anderson Infant Parenting Center
Birchwood (2), Redding
Burney (2)
Cottonwood (2)
Gateway EHS (2), Shasta Lake
Happy Valley (2) + Home Base
Juniper EHS (2), Redding
Mc Arthur
Mountain Gate (4) + Home Base
Oak View (6), Redding
Shasta College EHS (4), Redding
Shasta College (2), Redding
Verde Vale, Anderson

Head Start Home Visiting-3

Anderson Cottage EHS
Birchwood Cottage EHS, Redding
Life Center EHS, Shasta Lake

Non-Child Care-16 Programs

Bright Futures

Burney, Fall River, Montgomery Creek
and Shingletown

City of Redding Recreation

Tiny Tots & ABC/123

Enterprise School Readiness Program

Rother Elementary School

FaithWorks!/Francis Court

Happy Valley School Readiness Program

Northern Valley Catholic Social Service

Teen Parenting & CAL LEARN

Redding School Readiness Program

Juniper & Cypress Elementary Schools

SCOE-Early Childhood Services

License Exempt & New Providers

Shasta Family YMCA

Read to Me Book Club & Baby Playtime

Family Child Care-18 Programs

ABC Child Care, Redding
Angie's Family Child Care, Redding
Cozy Kids Child Care, Redding
Critter Country Child Care, Redding
Darcy's Daycare, Anderson
Denny's Dimpled Darlings, Redding
Home Away From Home, Redding
Jackie's Home Day Care, Redding
Kilby Kare, Redding
Kristy's Day Care, Redding
Lil' Blessings, Redding
Mary's In Home Child Care, Redding
Mommy Gin's Daycare, Redding
Randol Family Child Care, Redding
Rosie's Family Child Care
Sunny Patch Kids, Redding
Teresa Hunt's Child Care, Redding
TINYTOWN Child Care, Redding

Other Funding Recipients-16 Programs

New Directions to Hope-2

Shasta & Tehama Counties

SCOE Early Intervention Home Visiting

Tehama County

Shasta County Children & Family Services

Options Program

Shasta County Women's Refuge

Children Too!

Shasta Head Start-10

Siskiyou & Trinity Counties

Verde Vale Special Day Preschool, Anderson

For more information contact Linda Delles @ Shasta Family YMCA 530-246-9622